

Supports Around Me and My Family

Created for mothers by Helen Bourke-Taylor PhD©

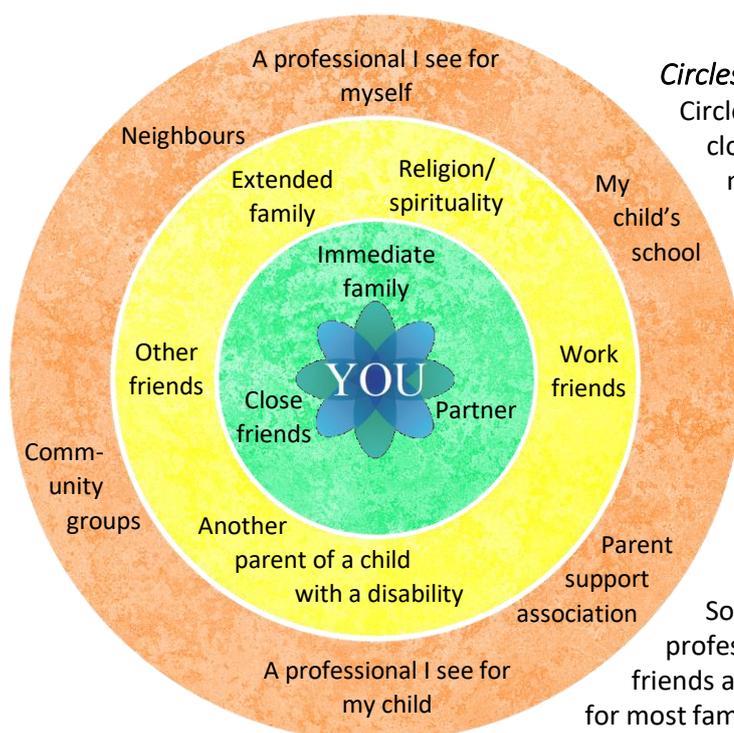
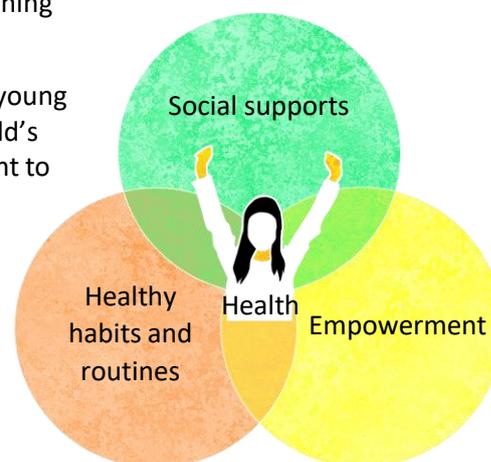


Research with mothers of children with a disability shows that supports around the mother, child and family make a big difference to family stress. Life can be smoother with supports around you and your family. Managing everyday challenges and obstacles can be easier when you have organised, and are using formal and informal supports. Communication is key to maintaining connections with support that is important to your family.

This set of fact sheets addresses support for families of children and young people with disabilities in three different contexts: the home, the child's educational or recreational setting, and the community. It is important to be empowered to use support in each of these settings.

How are empowerment and support related?

Empowered mothers recognise that it isn't necessary to manage their responsibilities alone. Being empowered means that mothers recognise the need for, find and use support.



Circles of support

Circles of support are the people in our lives who are close and supportive to us. People who we consider more important and supportive (i.e. partner, close friends) are in our inner circle of support. Other people may not be as supportive and may be in an outer circle.

Everyone's circles of support is different, and that is okay! What is important is maintaining closeness and sharing support with those who are supportive, and who value the relationship as much as you do. Likewise, we also need to recognise and maintain distance from less positive influences.

Some support is formal, such as paid carers and professionals. Other support is informal, such as friends and family. Both types of support are important for most families.

So what can I do?

Consider what type, and how much support your child, yourself and your family needs. Your health and well-being may be heavily influenced by the supports around you. Maintain relationships with people close in your circles of support. Keep communication lines open with your formal and informal supports. Stay in touch with supportive others through sharing time together, phone calls, messages or social media. The supports that you have harnessed around you play a large part in you and your family's well-being.

**You and your family can only benefit from the right supports.
Communicate with people who are close in your circles of support.**

Visit our website at <http://www.healthymothers-healthyfamilies.com/> for references and more information.

If this fact sheet has raised any concerns, please seek medical advice from your local GP. Alternatively, please call LifeLine on 13 11 14 or Carers Australia, who can provide short-term counselling and emotional support for carers and families, on 1800 242 636.